



THE CITY OF WINDSOR

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DREW DILKENS, DBA
MAYOR

Hon. Chrystia Freeland
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3

March 15, 2022

Hon. Peter Bethlenfalvy
Minister of Finance
Frost Building South
7th Floor - 7 Queen's Park Crescent
Toronto, ON M7A 1Y7

Dear Ministers Freeland and Bethlenfalvy:

As you are aware, the City of Windsor was the site of an illegal occupation at the foot of the Ambassador Bridge, disrupting trade and commerce for the United States and Canada, which began the evening of February 7, 2022. Subsequent to a successful Injunction Order granted by Ontario Superior Court Chief Justice Morawetz on February 11, 2022, Windsor Police, with the tactical assistance of the OPP and RCMP were able to clear the roadway for traffic once again on February 14, 2022.

However, since that time, the national security threats posed by the continued risk of recidivism and renewed protest activity resulted in a heightened security presence along Huron Church Road, the municipal artery which connects the Ambassador Bridge to Ontario's 401 highway system. Local police did their best to clear access to impacted businesses along Huron Church Road as quickly as possible, however, for dozens of establishments along this roadway, access to their business remained limited and commercial traffic reduced until March 13, 2022, more than a month after the initial occupation began.

Windsor Police, and their partners in law enforcement, have done an exemplary job in quickly clearing the illegal occupation and maintaining the security of Huron Church Road for over \$400-million in goods that travel this crossing each day. Since early February, the Windsor Police Service, the City of Windsor and our partners have experienced significant costs associated with the illegal occupation, and the ongoing need to secure Huron Church Road against continued risks. These are costs go well above the normal course for municipal operations and are related to the clearing of this international gateway. To that end, the City of Windsor is requesting reimbursement of approximately \$5.7-million towards these unforeseen costs. It would be unreasonable to expect municipal taxpayers to shoulder these costs alone. It should be noted that this funding request is subject to change as final invoices and charges are tallied, specifically any additional reciprocal costs associated with hosting members of various law enforcement agencies from across the Province. The quick local response to this national crisis helped bring about a safe conclusion to the Ambassador Bridge's occupation and restored access to this vital international trade corridor. This \$5.7-million is in addition to the \$25-million COVID-19 related deficit for 2022 that the City of Windsor is already facing – driven largely by the operating costs of the Windsor-

Detroit Tunnel and Windsor International Airport, whose operations have been dramatically impacted by the ongoing public health crisis.

OPP and RCMP support was critical towards clearing the occupation in a peaceful and safe way and the commitment that your governments displayed at that time helped bolster all those, myself included, who were dealing with the emergency situation unfolding in our community. I am asking you to reaffirm that commitment with the appropriate financial support the City of Windsor requires to cover the costs associated with clearing the illegal occupation.

Under separate cover to your colleagues, we would be pleased to participate and contribute to this incident's debriefing and your respective emergency regulatory obligations to mitigate this risk in the future. We look forward to working together to harden our important international crossings through human and capital resource planning and deployment.

The City of Windsor Finance Department is at your disposal as it pertains to accounting for these costs and providing any background documentation your Governments may require to support our funding request.

I look forward to a reply at your earliest convenience.



Drew Dilkens
Mayor, City of Windsor

CC.

Lisa Gretzky, MPP (Windsor West)
Percy Hatfield, MPP (Windsor—Tecumseh)
Brian Masse, MP (Windsor West)
Irek Kusmierczyk, MP (Windsor – Tecumseh)